

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Gunnison Field Office
DOI-BLM-CO-S060-2010-0019-EA**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-S060-2010-0019-EA

CASEFILE/PROJECT NUMBER:

Allotment Number 16003

PROJECT NAME: Round Corral Creek Allotment #16003 Grazing Permit Issuance

PLANNING UNIT:

Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) Management Unit(s) 12

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: New Mexico Principal Meridian,
T.49N. R5W. portions of Sec 11 and 12

APPLICANT: Round Corral Creek Allotment #16003 Permittee

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTION: The Round Corral Creek Allotment is located approximately 7 miles east of Cimarron, Colorado in Gunnison County. The allotment consists of 539 BLM acres and 653 private acres within one pasture. Most of the public land in the allotment consists of steep forested hillsides, including the steep cliffs south of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison River. Very little of the public lands in the allotment are accessible to cattle. Some of the public lands in the allotment are administered by the National Park Service as a part of the Curecanti National Recreation Area. The current permit is as follows:

Livestock		Season of Use	% P.L.	AUMs
No.	Kind/Class			
5	Cattle	6/1-9/30	100	21

* This allotment is recorded as 100% BLM; however, more than half of the land in the allotment is private and much of the public land in the allotment is inaccessible to livestock grazing due to the steep slopes. Historically, the allotment was considered to be 35% public land available for grazing. However, given the extremely steep slopes on most of the public portions of the allotment, less than 35% of the allotment area is public land accessible to livestock grazing.

A land health determination was completed for this allotment in 2009. The Responsible Official determined that the allotment is meeting all land health standards.

B. PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the proposed action is to issue one permit that authorizes livestock grazing on the Round Corral Creek Allotment #16003 such that livestock grazing 1) is in compliance with the Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) objectives, 2) achieves or makes significant progress towards achieving the Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado and complies with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado, in conformance with the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health (43 CFR 4180.1) and Standards and Guidelines (43 CFR 4180.2) and 3) meets the habitat objectives of Canada lynx Conservation Assessment and Strategy. This action is needed now because livestock grazing on the Round Corral Creek Allotment is currently being authorized under the authority of the 2004 Appropriations Act (Public Law 108-108).

C. DECISION TO BE MADE: The BLM will decide what specific livestock and vegetation management actions will be implemented to continue to authorize livestock grazing in compliance with the RMP and Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado.

D. SCOPING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Prior to the rangeland health assessments, scoping letters requesting any information concerning the allotment were sent to the permittee and the following agencies and groups; Colorado Division of Wildlife, Colorado State Forest Service, USDI National Park Service, Western Area Power Administration, Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, Colorado Trail Riders, Western Colorado Congress, Forest Guardians, Colorado Mountain Club, High Country Citizen's Alliance, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, Colorado Native Plant Society, Gunnison County Stock-Grower's Association, National Wildlife Federation, Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition, The Wilderness Society, The Nature Conservancy, Sinapu, Rocky Mountain Biological Lab, Colorado Outfitters Association, Rocky Mountain Resource Management Service, American Lands Alliance, The Sagebrush Sea, and Western Watersheds Project.

E. ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

The following issues and concerns were identified through public scoping comments and interdisciplinary team review of the proposed action.

1. Issues to be Analyzed

These are issues that will help make a reasoned choice between alternatives or that may be related to a potentially significant effect.

- a. Cultural Resources – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on cultural resources?
- b. Migratory Birds – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on migratory birds?
- c. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on threatened, endangered, and sensitive species?

2. Issues Not Analyzed

See Appendix A for a discussion of other resources that either were not present or that were not affected to a degree that warranted detailed analysis.

II. DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION (Continue Current Management)

The proposed action is to issue a grazing permit on the Round Corral Creek Allotment for a period of 10 years.

The permit would include the following terms and conditions, goals, and objectives to achieve allotment specific objectives, that will, 1) meet the Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) objectives, and 2) achieve or make significant progress towards achieving the Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado and comply with the Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado, in conformance with the Fundamentals of Rangeland Health (43 CFR 4180.1) and Standards and Guidelines (43 CFR 4180.2):

Livestock		Season of Use	% P.L.	AUMs
No.	Kind/Class			
15	Cattle	6/1-9/30	35	21

1. Uplands will not exceed a utilization level of 40-60% of the current years' growth for key forage species during the grazing period of use.
2. Any objects or sites of cultural or paleontological value, such as historic or prehistoric resources, graves or grave markers, human remains, ruins, cabins, rock art, fossils, or artifacts shall not be damaged or disturbed. If any such resources are encountered, the permittee shall notify BLM immediately.
3. Salt and/or mineral supplements will not be placed within ¼ mile of any riparian area, wet meadow, or temporary or permanent watering facility. Excess salt and/or mineral sources will be removed from the allotment following grazing use each year.
4. Temporary water hauling site locations shall be coordinated with the BLM. Troughs associated with these sites must have a wildlife escape ramp. To prevent wildlife deaths, these troughs must be removed or turned over each year when they are no longer needed for livestock grazing use.
5. The permittee shall provide the Bureau of Land Management with reasonable administrative access across private and leased lands for the orderly management and protection of the public lands.
6. When poisonous plants are identified as a threat to livestock, management actions to avoid grazing the area during the problem period would be developed. Infestations of noxious weeds would be incorporated into the Field Office noxious weed control program as they are identified.
7. Grazing use for the allotment would be in compliance with the Gunnison Resource Area RMP, which was amended to adopt the Colorado Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock in Colorado.
8. Grazing use would be in conformance with Canada lynx habitat standards:

- a. Do not allow livestock use in openings created by fire or timber harvest that would delay successful regeneration of the shrub and tree components.
- b. Manage grazing in aspen stands to ensure sprouting and sprout survival sufficient to perpetuate the long-term viability of the clones.
- c. Within the elevational ranges that encompass forested lynx habitat, shrub-steppe habitats should be considered as integral to the lynx habitat matrix and should be managed to maintain or achieve mid-seral or higher condition.
- d. Within lynx habitat, manage livestock grazing in riparian areas and willow carrs to maintain or achieve mid-seral or higher condition to provide cover and forage for prey species.

9. All range improvements for which the permittee has maintenance responsibility, including fences, troughs, and reservoirs, must be properly maintained prior to livestock turnout. The permittee must notify the BLM prior to beginning any maintenance activities that require the use of heavy equipment, such as tractors, backhoes, or graders. Allotment boundary fences for which the permittee has maintenance responsibility must be maintained every year, even if the pasture is being rested.

Round Corral Creek Allotment Range Improvements

Project		Location				Maintenance Responsibility
Name	Number	Township	Range	Section	Subdivision	
Veo Stock Spring	230845	48 N	5 W	8	NWNW	Permittee

Allotment Goal

The Round Corral Creek Allotment will be managed to provide for a maximum achievable diversity and production of biological resources to improve and sustain habitat for wildlife, to help sustain the economic stability of the permittees, and to allow for quality opportunities for public land users while achieving or making significant progress toward achieving BLM's Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado and conformance to BLM's Guidelines for Livestock Management in Colorado.

Allotment Objectives

a. Native Uplands

The management objective for native upland vegetation on the Round Corral Creek Allotment is to maintain or improve the vigor, production and diversity of desirable plants to support a variety of resource uses, including, but not limited to livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, and recreation. Native upland sites will be managed to achieve and maintain basal cover values which are equal to or greater than those listed for the slightly/moderately accelerated erosion threshold as described in the Montrose District Soil Erosion Monitoring Guidelines for each ecological site.

b. Riparian Areas

Riparian areas will be managed to maintain or achieve a mid-seral or later stage of ecological succession and to provide adequate herbaceous plant residue on stream banks and flood plains during seasons when high flows are likely.

Monitoring/Evaluation

The BLM would be responsible for implementing the following monitoring/ evaluation requirements:

The monitoring program would include appropriate consultation, cooperation and coordination with the rangeland users, other agencies, and interested publics. Close coordination between the permittees or their representatives, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and the BLM of all livestock related field monitoring is essential to determine conformity with the terms and conditions of the permits.

Sufficient monitoring data would be collected to determine if management actions are, 1) contributing to the achievement of allotment objectives and the Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) management objectives, 2) achieving or making significant progress toward achieving the Standards for Public Land Health in Colorado and conforming to the Colorado Livestock Grazing Management Guidelines.

The intensity and frequency of additional monitoring done on the allotment would be dependent on annual funding allocations and work priorities established for the Gunnison Field Office. Monitoring priorities for the allotment would be determined annually. Guidance provided in BLM Technical References, BLM Manuals, the Gunnison Resource Area Rangeland Monitoring Plan, would be the basis for monitoring/inventory conducted on the allotment. Other appropriate guidance documentation would be considered when establishing, collecting and evaluating data.

Monitoring would include both short-term and long-term studies. Short-term monitoring would include compliance monitoring, actual use data, range readiness when necessary through a joint field inspection with the BLM and the permittees, utilization studies on riparian areas and uplands as well as climate and soil moisture data. Long term monitoring would document and measure trends toward or achievement of objectives over a period of years.

Evaluations may be conducted anytime during the implementation of this proposed action if monitoring data and/or other data support changes to the allotment objectives, management actions or annual permitted use.

B. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL:

1. No Grazing Alternative

During scoping for other similar proposed actions, input from the public included the addition of a No Grazing Alternative. Under this alternative, no livestock grazing would be authorized for the Round Corral Creek Allotment. The No Grazing Alternative was considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis because it would not conform to the Approved Gunnison Resource

Area Resource Management Plan/Record of Decision (RMP/ROD). The RMP/ROD identified livestock grazing as an appropriate and suitable use on the Round Corral Creek Allotment. In addition, a No Grazing Alternative would not meet the Purpose and Need for Action.

C. PLAN CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

The Proposed Action is subject to, has been reviewed for, and been found to be in conformance with, the following plan (43 CFR 1610.5, BLM 1617.3). The plan conformance review included consideration of Standard Management (pgs. 2-1 to 2-19), Management Unit Prescriptions (pgs. 2-19 to 2-39), and Standards for Public Land Health (pgs. 4-7).

Name of Plan: Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (including Adoption of Standards for Public Land Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management in Colorado)

Date Approved: February 1993 (amended February 1997)

Management Unit(s): 12 (elk and deer crucial winter range)

Decision Number/Page:

Standard Management Direction, pg. 2-1 to 2-12 and 3-1 to 3-8;

Decision Language: (pg. 3-5) "Grazing permits specifying the season of use, number, and kind of livestock will be issued to each operator for each allotment. Operators will have to obtain BLM approval before changing the grazing specifications outlined in their permits."

Management Unit 12 Direction, pgs. 2-33 to 2-34, 3-13.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT / ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

A. Cultural Resources – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on cultural resources?

Affected Environment

Range permit renewals are federal undertakings (as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y)) that fall under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Range improvements associated with the allotment (*e.g.*, fences, spring improvements, construction of permanent water structures, etc.) are subject to compliance requirements under Section 106 and will undergo standard cultural resource inventory and evaluation procedures. During Section 106 review, a cultural resource assessment was completed for the allotment (CR Report 09GN012) following the procedures and guidance outlined in the following: The 1980 National Programmatic Agreement Regarding the Livestock Grazing and Range Improvement Program, Instructional Memorandum (IM)-WO-99-039, IM-CO-99-007, IM-CO-99-019 and IM-CO-2001-026. BLM Manuals and Colorado Protocol between the BLM and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO 1998) provide guidance in meeting BLM's responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. The results of these assessments are summarized below. Copies of the cultural resource assessment are located in the archaeological files at the Gunnison Field Office. Cultural resources are fragile, non-renewable and significant sites and are protected by law, and various regulations.

The cultural resources in the Gunnison Field Office span approximately 12,000 years and are represented by Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Formative, Ute and Euro-American cultures. Sites include lithic scatters, quarries, temporary camps, extended camps, village, rock shelters, rock art, wickiups, scarred trees, hunting sites, kill/butchering sites, processing areas, tree platforms, eagle traps, vision quest sites, caves, trails, roads, water resource sites, homesteads, ranches, cabins, mills, railroads, transmission lines, mines, trash dumps, aspen art, isolated artifacts, graves, etc. Many of these sites have the potential to be directly affected and impacted by livestock grazing. Continued grazing may cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to significant cultural properties.

In February of 2009 the Gunnison Field Office mailed letters and maps to the Ute Mountain Ute, Southern Ute, and the Ute Indian Tribes, identifying all proposed 2010 grazing permit renewals. No comments have been received by this office.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigation:

Many cultural resources have the potential to be directly affected and impacted by livestock grazing and related activities, such as pipeline construction, water trough placement and location of salt/mineral blocks. Grazing has the potential to cause substantial ground disturbance and cause cumulative, long term, irreversible adverse effects to significant cultural properties. Most commonly, grazing impacts to cultural resources result in accelerated erosion, which causes deflation of buried features and artifacts; displacement of artifacts is also common in areas of cattle concentration. Cattle also may adversely affect rock art and standing structures through rubbing and trampling.

Any known historic sites that are located where livestock concentrate will be field visited to assess and monitor livestock grazing impacts. If adverse effects are found, mitigation measures will need to be implemented. These can include, but are not exclusively limited to, a decrease in the AUMs, construction of fenced exclosures around the sites, excavation of the sites and/or installation of erosion control devices. If future cultural resource inventories identify significant sites, the sites will need to be monitored to determine if adverse effects are occurring to the sites. The livestock impacts will be assessed within the ten year period of the permit.

Proposed Action

No known significant resources have been discovered in the allotment and no areas of livestock concentration on BLM lands have been identified. Based on the lack of concentration areas within the allotment, no additional archeological inventory is necessary for the renewal of the grazing permit.

There are currently no known areas of Native American Religious Concern located within this allotment.

B. Migratory Birds – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on migratory birds?

Affected Environment

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 was passed to regulate the taking of native birds. In 2001, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13186 (66 FR 3853), which directs federal agencies to further implement the MBTA by considering the effects of projects and actions on migratory birds. Pursuant to this Executive Order, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, BLM and Forest Service are working on a Memorandum of Understanding which requires agencies to review the US Fish and Wildlife Service *Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)* for species that may inhabit a project area. When reviewing the effects of projects/actions on migratory birds, species on the BCC list are emphasized. Bird species on the list for the Southern Rockies/Colorado Plateau region which could breed within this proposed project area include the flammulated owl (*Otus flammeolus*), Virginias warbler (*Vermivora virginiae*), Green-tailed towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*), Black-throated gray warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*), White throated swift (*Aeronautes saxatalis*), Wilson's warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*), Band-tailed pigeon (*Patagioenas fasciata*), Broad-tailed hummingbird (*Selasphorus platycercus*), MacGillivrays warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*), Violet green swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*), Brewer's sparrow (*Spizella breweri*), Sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli*), and Swainson's hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). Flammulated owls and Violet green swallows are cavity nesters that may nest within the scattered mixed conifer/aspen stands or riparian areas. Broad-tailed hummingbirds are a tree nesting species with populations recorded in montane forest and shrub habitats throughout the foothills, reaching their greatest breeding densities in aspen forests. The Black-throated gray warbler spends its spring and fall amongst piñon-juniper, scrub oak, riparian lowlands (cottonwoods [*Populus*], willows [*Salix*], tamarisk [*Tamarix*]), and riparian transition (cottonwood, willow, and alder [*Alnus*]) habitats (Kingery 1988). Nesting occurs off the ground in the midstory branches of Douglas fir-oak forest. The White-throated swift occurs in mountainous and hilly terrain adjacent to both open country and heavily forested areas. In Colorado, nesting occurs 85% of the time in cliffs, rock or talus (Atlas). Cliff nests occur in coniferous and deciduous forests < shrublands and grasslands (Atlas). Wilson's warbler populations are restricted to mesic shrub thickets of riparian habitats, edges of beaver ponds, lakes, bogs, and overgrown clear-cuts of montane and boreal zone; may reach into alpine zone (Finch 1989, EMA). MacGillivrays warbler requires aspen forests with a dense shrubby understory. Habitat can also be composed of coniferous forest clearcuts with spruce and Douglas fir or mixed deciduous forests with birch, aspen, or poplar. They nest in clumps of grass on the ground or near the ground in shrubs. The Green-tailed towhee breeds in dry shrubby hillsides and scattered aspen trees intermixed with shrubs. Virginia's warblers nest primarily in Gambel oak but are also recorded in dense shrublands and on scrub-adorned slopes of mesas, foothills, open ravines, and mountain valleys in semiarid country. The Band-tailed pigeon is found mostly in forests of ponderosa pine but also found in spruce/fir forests and scrub oak shrublands. Brewers sparrows and Sage sparrows are tied closely to sagebrush. Brewer's sparrows breed in tall dense stands of sagebrush broken up with grassy openings. Sage sparrows nest within sizable (>30 acres), low-elevation (<8400 ft), semi-open to dense stands of 0.5 to 2 m (1.5 to 6.5 ft) tall sagebrush (Colorado Partners in Flight website; Lambeth 1998) which are uncommon but could occur within this allotment. They typically arrive in Colorado by April, initiate nesting in May, and fledge young during June and July. They construct cup nests, usually at mid-bush level with sufficient foliage above to conceal the nest (Lambeth 1998). Swainson hawks typically nest in scattered trees within grassland, shrubland, riparian, or agricultural landscapes. They forage in open stands of vegetation.

Environmental Consequences and Mitigation:

Livestock grazing will not directly affect cavity and tree nesting species including flammulated owls, Broad-tailed hummingbirds, Violet-green swallow, Black-throated gray warbler, White throated swift, Band-tailed pigeon, and Swainson's hawks. Therefore, no take of these species or their nests is expected to occur as a result of grazing under this alternative. The ground nesting of the MacGillivray's warbler, Virginia's warbler, Wilson's warbler, and Green-tailed towhee will not be inadvertently affected due to the nest being located in dense vegetation usually beneath shrubs or dense undergrowth. Although the Brewers sparrow's and Sage sparrow's nesting period overlaps the livestock grazing season in the Round Corral Creek Allotment, placement of their nests off the ground and well within a sagebrush plant would protect them from being trampled by livestock.

C. Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on threatened, endangered, and sensitive species?

Affected Environment /Environmental Consequences and Mitigation:

Of the threatened, endangered and sensitive species within the Gunnison Field Office, those that warrant discussion are Canada lynx, Gunnison sage grouse, and bald eagle. Canada lynx is threatened under the endangered species act while Gunnison sage grouse and bald eagle are BLM sensitive species.

Canada lynx

The Round Corral Creek Allotment overlaps with less than 1% of the Blue/Pine Creek Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU). This LAU is comprised of 66,185 acres. Approximately 86 acres of the Round Corral Creek Allotment lies within this LAU, with 0 acres mapped as "winter/denning" lynx habitat. The Round Corral Creek Allotment also contains 51 acres categorized as "other" and 35 acres mapped as "winter". These are the large contiguous tracts of trees and are mainly dominated by Douglas fir and aspen. Based upon inspection of the allotments in 2008, higher elevation lynx habitat within the grazing allotments generally appears healthy with good structural complexity including grass, forbs, shrub and tree components. Species diversity is generally high with native species being dominant.

Gunnison sage grouse

There are no known Gunnison sage grouse leks within this allotment.

Bald eagle

The Round Corral Creek Allotment does contain Bald eagle winter concentration corridor, however there are no mature cottonwoods present for roost trees.

D. Rangeland Management – What effect would the proposed action or alternatives have on the livestock grazing system associated with the Round Corral Creek Allotment?

Affected Environment/Environmental Consequences and Mitigation:

The mandatory terms and conditions on this permit would change from 5 cows from 6/1 to 9/30 at 100% public land (21 AUMs) to 15 cows from 6/1 to 9/30 at 35% public land (21 AUMs).

The number of cattle and percent public land is changed under the proposed action to reflect the actual numbers of livestock that graze on the private lands contained within the Round Corral Creek Allotment, in conjunction with the public lands. As a result, there would be no increase or decrease in livestock use on the allotment, and there would be no impact to the livestock grazing permittee or the livestock grazing system associated with the Round Corral Creek Allotment.

E. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS SUMMARY:

The cumulative effects of drought, excessive big game use, and historic livestock grazing use are generally concerns in many grazing allotments throughout the Gunnison Basin. However, the livestock grazing management and lack of livestock accessibility in the Round Corral Creek Allotment has resulted in, and is expected to continue to maintain, satisfactory conditions in plant vigor and productivity and vegetative cover. The land health standards on this allotment are all being met and are expected to continue being met.

IV. TRIBES, INDIVIDUALS, ORGANIZATIONS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED:

On July 18, 2008, prior to the rangeland health assessments, scoping letters requesting any information concerning the allotment were sent to the permittee and 27 other entities, including 4 federal and state agencies and 23 organizations. The following entities were contacted:

Colorado Division of Wildlife	Colorado State Forest Service
USDI National Park Service	Western Area Power Administration
Sierra Club	Trout Unlimited
Colorado Trail Riders	Western Colorado Congress
Forest Guardians	Colorado Mountain Club
High Country Citizen's Alliance	Colorado Cattlemen's Association
Colorado Native Plant Society	Gunnison County Stock-Grower's Association, Inc.
National Wildlife Federation	Colorado Environmental Coalition
Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Coalition	The Wilderness Society
The Nature Conservancy	Sinapu
Rocky Mountain Biological Lab	Colorado Outfitters Association
Center for Native Ecosystems	Rocky Mountain Resource Management Services
American Lands Alliance	The Sagebrush Sea Campaign
Western Watersheds Project	

Of the entities contacted, the permittee and two interest groups (WildEarth Guardians, a synthesis of Forest Guardians, Sinapu, and the Sagebrush Sea Campaign, and Rocky Mountain Resource Management Services) responded that they wished to remain informed of actions planned for the allotment.

V. LIST OF PREPARERS:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area(s) of Responsibility</u>
Russell Japuntich	Wildlife Biologist	Migratory Birds Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Terrestrial Wildlife
Elizabeth Francisco	Archaeologist	Cultural Resources Native American Religious Concerns
Cynthia Landing	Rangeland Management Specialist	Noxious Weeds Range Management
Tara de Valois	Rangeland Management Specialist	Range Management Interdisciplinary Team Lead

APPENDIX A
INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM ANALYSIS RECORD CHECKLIST

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-S060-2010-0019-EA

PROJECT NAME: Round Corral Creek Allotment #16003 Grazing Permit Issuance

DETERMINATION OF STAFF: (Choose one of the following abbreviated options for the left column)

NP = not present in the area impacted by the proposed or alternative actions

NA = present, but not affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required

PA = present and requires further analysis because 1) analysis of the issue is necessary to make a reasoned choice between alternatives, or 2) analysis of the issue is necessary to determine the significance of impacts.

NC = (DNAs only) actions and impacts not changed from those disclosed in the existing NEPA documents cited in Section C of the DNA form.

PHYSICAL RESOURCES			
Air Quality (Clean Air Act)	Determination	Signature:	Date:
	NA	<i>Andrew Breibart</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: Livestock grazing has a negligible effect on air quality in the project area.		
Geology/Minerals	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>David Lazorchak</i>	<i>4/13/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: Livestock grazing has no effect on geologic or mineral resources in the project area.		
Paleontology	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Elizabeth Francisco</i>	<i>3/9/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: Livestock grazing has no effect on paleontological resources in the project area.		
Soils (includes Public Land Health Standard 1)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Andrew Breibart</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Floodplains (EO11988)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Andrew Breibart</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Water Quality (drinking/ground) (Clean Water Act and others) (includes Public Land Health Standard 5)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Andrew Breibart</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Fire and Fuels Management	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	Dave Kinateder	4/5/2010
	Rationale for Determination: Livestock grazing may reduce fuel loads in light flashy fuels however this in not a significant issue.		
Invasive, Non-native Species (Federal Noxious Weed Act and EO 13112)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Tara de Valois</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: No noxious weeds were found on the public lands in the allotment. There are invasive, non-native species on the private lands in the allotment; however, it is not anticipated that the proposed action will hasten the spread of invasive, non-native species onto the public lands in the allotment.		
Forest Vegetation (includes Public Land Health Standard 3)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Brian Brown</i>	3/4/10
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Upland Vegetation (includes Public Land Health Standard 3)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Tara M. de Valois</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Riparian Zones and Wetlands (EO 11990) (includes Public Land Health Standard 2)	Determination	Signature:	Date
	NA	<i>Andrew Breibart</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Wildlife (includes Public Land Health Standard 3)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Russell Lapuntich</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Migratory Birds (EO 13186 and Migratory Bird Treaty Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Russell Lapuntich</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment.		
Threatened, Endangered, Candidate (ESA), and/or Sensitive Animal Species (includes Public Land Health Standard 4)	Determination	Signature	Date
	PA	<i>Russell Lapuntich</i>	3/3/2010
	Rationale for Determination: This standard is being met in the allotment, but the issue will be carried forward for analysis to demonstrate compliance with ESA and Sec. 107 consultation.		

HERITAGE RESOURCES and HUMAN ENVIRONMENT			
Cultural Resources (National Historic Preservation Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	PA	<i>Elizabeth Francisco</i>	<i>3/9/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: This issue will be carried forward for analysis to demonstrate compliance with NHPA and Sec. 106 consultation.		
Environmental Justice (EO 12898)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Tara M. de Valois</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action has no disproportionate impact on any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group.		
Native American Religious Concerns (American Indian Religious Freedom Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Elizabeth Francisco</i>	<i>3/9/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: No Native American religious concerns have been identified in the project area.		
Socio-economics	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Tara M. de Valois</i>	<i>3/3/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action has no effect on socioeconomics in the project area, including on the individual permittee.		
Visual Resources	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Sally Thode</i>	<i>3/4/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action is in Visual Resource Management Classes 2 and 4. The proposed action would have no effect on visual resources in the project area.		
Wastes (hazardous or solid) (RCRA and CERCLA)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>David Lazorchak</i>	<i>4/13/2010</i>
	Rationale for Determination: There were no hazardous or solid wastes identified on public land in the project area.		

LAND USES and SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS			
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (FLPMA)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Sally Thode</i>	3/4/2010
	Rationale for Determination: There are no designated ACEC's in the project area.		
Farmlands (Prime or Unique) (SMCRA and Farmland Protection Policy Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Marnie Medina</i>	4/2/10
	Rationale for Determination: There are no prime or unique farmlands in the project area.		
Lands/Realty Authorizations	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Marnie Medina</i>	4/2/10
	Rationale for Determination: There are no lands/realty authorizations in the project area.		
Rangeland Management	Determination	Signature	Date
	PA	<i>Tara M. de Valois</i>	3/2/2010
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action continues current management and so has no effect on rangeland management. However, the mandatory terms and conditions on the permit have been changed, so rangeland management is discussed above.		
Recreation	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Sally Thode</i>	3/4/2010
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action would have no effect on recreation in the project area.		
Access and Transportation	Determination	Signature	Date
	NA	<i>Sally Thode</i>	3/4/2010
	Rationale for Determination: The proposed action has no effect on access in the project area.		
Wild and Scenic Rivers (Wild and Scenic Rivers Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Sally Thode</i>	3/4/2010
	Rationale for Determination: There are no designated wild or scenic rivers in the project area.		
Wilderness (FLPMA and Wilderness Act)	Determination	Signature	Date
	NP	<i>Sally Thode</i>	3/4/2010
	Rationale for Determination: There is no designated Wilderness or Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in the project area. Therefore, there is no effect on Wilderness.		

FINAL REVIEW:

Reviewer Title	Signature	Date	Comments
NEPA Coordinator	<i>Marnie Medina</i>	4/2/10	
Field Manager	Brian St. George	1/31/11	

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Gunnison Field Office
DOI-BLM-CO-S060-2010-0019-EA**

**FONSI
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the referenced environmental assessment, and considering the significance criteria in 40 CFR 1508.27, I have determined that the action will not have a significant effect on the human environment. Therefore, preparation of an environmental impact statement is not necessary.

RATIONALE

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Gunnison Field Office (GFO) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) DOI-BLM-CO-S060-2010-0019-EA to analyze the effects of issuing a 10-year permit for livestock grazing in the Round Corral Creek Allotment.

The EA analyzed potential site-specific impacts on resources that would result from implementing the proposed action or alternatives. The analysis addressed whether or not the proposed action and alternatives would: 1) address public lands that are failing to achieve the Public Land Health Standards and/or not conforming to the Guidelines for Livestock Management in Colorado due to livestock grazing (43 CFR 4180.2 (c)); and, 2) assure compliance with the objectives of the Approved Gunnison Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP).

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL: /s/ Brian St. George
Brian St. George, Gunnison Field Manager

DATE SIGNED: 1/31/11